



The Old Ironsides Report

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422nd Civil Affairs Helps Restore Iraq's Spinal Injury Center

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BAGHDAD, Iraq – The 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion is working to help Iraqi doctors and members of the community restore the city's Spinal Injury Center hospital.

Capt. Stacey Simms, special functions team chief of the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion, an Army Reserve unit based in Greensboro, N.C., assessed progress to restore and resupply the hospital building in Baghdad last month.

Formerly run by Iraq's Ministry of Defense, the Spinal Injury Center was used by Iraqi military personnel for stockpiling of caches of uniforms, helmets and protective masks.

The center is the only one of its kind in Iraq, Simms said.

Used for emergencies and long-term rehabilitation, the center presently holds 70 Iraqi patients in the few wards sanitary enough for their care.

Due to post-war looting and vandalism, a great deal of the hospital's equipment was stolen or destroyed, he said. More than half the center is still covered with dust and rubble.

Prior to Simm's assessment, the first priority in providing aid to the center was to provide food, blankets, clean sheets, clothing and personal hygiene items to the patients.

"This building had a half-life of 10 years," said Dr. Kaydar Al Chalaiei, director of the Spinal Injury Center. "That was 20 years ago."

Chalaiei explains that for the past 21 years the center has been operational, but no piece of equipment from the center could be discarded, sold or donated, even if the item was obsolete or inoperative.

Now outdated, junked equipment is scattered inside and outside of the facility. Looters have stolen most of the modern, operational equipment such as computers, air-conditioning systems, wheelchairs and beds.

"I am short of beds inside the ward," Chalaiei



Capt. Stacey Simms, special functions team chief of the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion, and Dr. Kaydar Al Chalaiei, director of the Spinal Injury Center, discuss plans to renovate the facility during a recent assessment of the center.

said. The wards in use are below sanitary standards. While some are sanitary, useless medical equipment fills the facility. With nowhere to store or dispose of the unusable equipment, patients are confined to a handful of rooms.

"They are lacking an awful lot right now," Simms said. "Their pediatric ward is loaded with old equipment, old files and rubbish."

There are six wards ready for use, said Chalaiei. After the wards are sanitized, he plans to start a pediatric spinal care unit, an intensive care unit, a rehabilitation clinic and a neurology clinic.

There are lecture halls and classrooms that need repairs, allowing the center to continue training interns and resident doctors. Later phases of the renovations will include getting medical labs operational and establishing security for the hospital, its patients and staff.

Chalaiei's and Simms' first goal is to have a clean and tidy building so that the staff can start working in sanitary conditions.

"One of the first things we are going to do is a big clean-up project. We are going to try to improve the quality of life for the patients there," Simms said.

NEWS

Liberians Greet Troops on Rescue Mission

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP) - West Africa's first troops landed Monday on an international rescue mission for Liberia, greeted by overjoyed civilians who spilled onto the airfield by the hundreds, screaming, "We want peace!" Nigerian soldiers in green camouflage and flak vests leapt from white U.N. helicopters onto the tarmac at Liberia's main airport, outside the country's besieged capital.

New Iraq Army Recruits Head for Training

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) - The U.S. military took 400 volunteers for the new Iraqi army to the northern city of Kirkuk on Monday to begin two months basic training, and American forces passed a third straight day without reporting the loss of a soldier in combat. According to the military authorities in the Iraqi capital there had not been a U.S. soldier killed in action since late Friday night.

Israel Waits on Doing More Withdrawals

JERUSALEM (AP) - Israel's defense minister said Monday he would not withdraw from more West Bank towns until the Palestinians acted against militants, while Israeli officials said the government was considering sweeping changes in the route of a planned security barrier to accommodate U.S. and Palestinian concerns. The statement by Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz heightened the pressure on Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas' government, which has resisted repeated Israeli calls to begin dismantling violent militant groups.

Chaplain's thought for the day:

He Found a Burglar

For several years a woman had been having trouble getting to sleep at night because she feared burglars. One night her husband heard a noise in the house, so he went downstairs to investigate. When he got there, he did find a burglar. "Good evening," said the man of the house. "I am pleased to see you. Come upstairs and meet my wife. She has been waiting 10 years to meet you."

William Marshall, Eternity Shut in a Span

Fearing what might happen never does anyone any good. It only produces anxiety and stress two things which can stop us from moving on in our lives.

"In God (I will praise His word), In God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me?
Psalm 56:4

SPORTS

Packers Face Chiefs in Hall of Fame Game

CANTON, Ohio (AP) - Someday, Brett Favre will be enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Until then, he'll settle for playing across the street. Favre, a three-time NFL MVP, is expected to take fewer than 15 snaps Monday night when the Packers open their exhibition season against the Kansas City Chiefs in the Pro Football Hall of Fame game

Oddly Enough:

Alleged Burglar Offers Counterfeit Bribe

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) -- An alleged burglar tried to buy his way out of trouble when Charles Lee caught him in his mother's home. The man, trapped in the house about 4 a.m., offered Lee a \$100 bill to let him go. The bill sported a picture of President Bush. "Yeah, the guy was trying to bribe me with fake money," Lee said. Lee was sleeping in the basement of the home when he heard his mother, Rozetta Lee, 87, screaming. "I snatched him and was dragging him through the house to take him outside and whoop him a little. I may be 53 years old, but I still have some fire in the furnace," Lee said. Lee then explained "The guy tried to hand me a \$100 bill. I knew it was fake, but I wouldn't have taken it anyway. It was one of those 9/11 George W. Bush bills." Des Moines police arrived at the scene and charged Michael Castiglione, 37, of Massachusetts, with second-degree burglary.

On This Day In History:

August 5th 1962

Actress and icon Marilyn Monroe was found dead in her bed, an empty bottle of sleeping pills by her side. Monroe was born Norma Jeane Mortenson on 1 June 1926. In December 1953, she was Playboy magazine's "Sweetheart" of the Month. Marilyn Monroe appeared in 30 films including *Bus Stop*, *The Seven Year Itch*, and *Some Like it Hot*, for which she won a Golden Globe for Best Actress in a Comedy. Aside from her films, Monroe is also remembered by many for her breathy version of *Happy Birthday*, sung to President Kennedy on his 45th birthday. In 1999, Monroe was named the Number One Sex Star of the 20th Century by Playboy magazine.